Retooling Systems for Neighborhood Stabilization

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About us

Center for Community Progress

• We are the only national nonprofit solely focused on building a future in which entrenched, systemic blight and vacancy no longer exist.

• We serve communities through policy development, technical assistance, leadership development, education, and research

• Since 2010: Technical assistance has been provided in more than 100 communities & trainings have reached 1,000s of professionals

• Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference: May 19-21, 2015 in Detroit.
Presentation Outline

I. Systems Approach

II. Diagnosis
   What, how and why

I. Prevention
   Delinquent Property Enforcement
   Strategic Code Enforcement/Demolition

II. Acquisition and Maintenance
   Land Banks and Land banking

III. Reuse Planning
   Decision Making Framework
   Alternate Reuse

IV. Key Takeaways
I. Systems Approach

- Prevention
- Diagnosis
- Data
- Cycle of Blight
- Acquisition and Maintenance
- Reuse Planning

PREVENTION

DIAGNOSIS

DATA

CYCLE OF BLIGHT

ACQUISITION AND MAINTENANCE

REUSE PLANNING
II. Diagnosis (what)

Understand your inventory.

- Basic parcel info – ownership, tax delinquency, physical conditions, occupancy
- Market conditions – property values, trends, investment areas
- GIS-based, updated regularly, used across departments, public interface

Source: [http://neocando.case.edu/](http://neocando.case.edu/)
II. Diagnosis (how)

Define the problem and identify assets.

- Unpack problem properties – what, why and how
- Identify assets – physical, institutional and emotional

II. Diagnosis (why)

Assess policies, tools and strategies.

• What are the policies and tools?
• What is missing?
• What needs to be improved?

III. Prevention

What are the warning signs in your community?

- Delinquent Property Taxes
- Deteriorating building conditions
- Unresponsive/Irresponsible Property Owners

Photo Courtesy of Payton Heins, Center for Community Progress
III. Prevention (cont’d)

Delinquent Tax Enforcement

• How can you create efficient, effective and equitable systems?

• How can you analyze the fiscal and community impacts of enforcement systems?

Strategic Code Enforcement

• The goal of any code enforcement program is to encourage private owners to maintain their property and use it productively and responsibly.

• A strategic code enforcement program must combine effective regulatory tools, policies (including cost recovery), and systems into a comprehensive strategy to improve communities through responsible property maintenance.
III. Prevention (cont’d)

Key Elements of Strategic Demolition

• An accurate understanding of the demolition inventory and pipeline

• A tool for determining demolition decisions at the site level

• A clear set of priorities to guide demolition activity in areas

• An integration with other stabilization activities and plans

Photo Courtesy of Youngstown Community Development Corporation
III. Prevention (cont’d)

Sample Demolition Decision Tree

Land Banks and Land banking

Is land banking the right tool?

A land bank is a public authority or nonprofit that focuses on the conversion of vacant, abandoned, tax-delinquent and foreclosed properties into productive use.

Source:
http://www.communityprogress.net/filebin/Land_Banks_and_Land_Banking_Book.pdf
IV. Acquisition and Maintenance (cont’d)

Key Elements of Land Banking

- Connected to tax foreclosure process
- Emphasis on community engagement
- Policy driven – transparent in policies
- Scaled in response to local land use goals
V. Reuse Planning

Decision Making Framework

Source: Detroit Future City Strategic Framework
V. Reuse Planning (cont’d)

Sample Resources for Alternate Reuse

• Baltimore’s Green Pattern Book

• Philadelphia Horticultural Society LandCare program
  http://phsonline.org/greening/landcare-program

• Reimagining Cleveland Ideas to Action Resource Book

Photo Courtesy of Kim Graziani, Center for Community Progress
VI. Key Takeaways

• Understand the systems that impact neighborhood stabilization

• Know your market and inventory

• Define goals and strategies

• Link acquisition, maintenance and disposition to strategies

• Develop a decision-making framework for reuse